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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT
99-705

ORIGINAL

GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION ACT OF 1986

JULY 23, 1986.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. HAWKINS, from the Committee on Education and Labor, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 3263]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Education and Labor, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3263) to establish a Federal program to strengthen and improve the capability of State and local educational agencies and private nonprofit schools to identify gifted and talented children and youth and to provide those children and youth with appropriate educational opportunities, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment to the text of the bill is a complete substitute therefor and appears in italic type in the reported bill.

SUMMARY

H.R. 3263, the Gifted and Talented Children and Youth Education Act of 1986, seeks to ensure that the best and brightest of our Nation's students are adequately and effectively served by our educational system. This bill authorizes $10 million for fiscal year 1987 and such sums as necessary for the four succeeding fiscal years for grants to State and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and other public and private agencies and organizations to strengthen our national ability to identify and meet the special educational needs of gifted and talented students.

With this very modest funding, the Committee envisions a Federal "capacity building" effort to identify and educate gifted and talented children. This will be accomplished by stimulating research, training personnel to serve gifted students, demonstrating effective

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techniques, and providing a national focal point for information and technical assistance.

Funds under H.R. 3263 will provide preservice and inservice training, establish model programs, offer technical assistance and information dissemination, and support a National Center for Research and Development in the Education of Gifted and Talented Children.

In administering the program and selecting the grantees through a competitive process, the Secretary of Education must give priority to: (1) programs which will identify gifted and talented children who may be overlooked by traditional assessment methods and (2) programs which will develop the capabilities of schools in an entire State or region to educate these students. The bill also requires the Secretary to designate a unit within the Department of Education to administer this program and serve as a focal point of national leadership and information.

LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION

H.R. 3263 was introduced on September 11, 1985, by Congressman Biaggi. The Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education held a hearing on the measure on May 6, 1986.

The Subcommittee met and reported the bill by unanimous voice vote on May 13, 1986. The full Committee held a mark-up session on the bill on June 25, 1986, and ordered it reported by unanimous voice vote.

NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Needs of gifted children

It is ironic that at a time when America is grappling with ways to compete internationally, expand our economy, and strengthen our scientific and technological edge, we are neglecting a vital and precious resource that holds the key to our pre-eminence in all those areas. Yet, that is what we are doing with our gifted and talented youth.

The Nation's 2.5 million gifted and talented students—those with innate intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership abilities—have the potential to make outstanding contributions in every aspect of our Nation's economic, social, cultural, and intellectual life. However, these children often face special barriers to quality education, barriers that are often overlooked.

Many gifted and talented children, perhaps as many as two million, remain unidentified. In fact, a significant proportion of dropouts may be gifted children whose abilities are not properly identified and nurtured. According to testimony before the Subcommittee, standardized tests are frequently ineffective tools for identifying gifted and talented children; the economically disadvantaged, handicapped, minority, and other youth with special needs often elude identification by traditional assessment methods.

Gifted students who are identified may still face special problems in school. They are often very bored by school programs that offer no challenge and may withdraw or become "trouble makers". Teachers who have not been trained to work with gifted students

may assume these students can make it in class without special assistance and may concentrate their efforts on other students. As a result, noted the National Commission on Excellence in Education in *A Nation At Risk*, "Over half the population of gifted students do not match their tested ability with comparable achievement in school." Approximately 50 percent of gifted children are working at least four grades below the level at which they could be working, according to testimony before the Subcommittee from the Council for Exceptional Children. These students who drift unattended through the educational system will never realize their full potential.

Inadequacy of existing programs

For the past three decades, major studies, some of them federally-funded, have amply demonstrated the needs of gifted children. Yet now, in the 1980's, we are providing special programs to just one million of these children, something between one-fourth and one-half of those who should have the advantage of these programs.

More disturbing is the quality of these existing programs. A recent study by the Richardson Foundation of Texas found that less than half of these programs were substantial, with the average program providing two to three hours enrichment per week and no modifications in the child's regular school program.

A survey by the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted found that 36 States require no certification or special coursework for teachers of gifted and talented children. Another recent study concluded that only 20 percent of the current teachers with the gifted have the skills to organize an appropriate curriculum for these students. Twenty-seven States have no mandated gifted programs. Of those that do, very little of the State money is used for research, training, or evaluation.

Prior to the enactment in 1981 of Chapter 2 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act [ECIA], the Federal government supported gifted and talented education through a categorical program authorized by title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA]. During the few years this program was funded, it provided several benefits. The 56 full-time gifted and talented consultants employed by State educational agencies are in many cases, a result of Federal encouragement through the ESEA program. Similarly, many of the 23 States which do have mandated programs began them concurrently with their participation in the Federal program. Thus, Federal involvement was stimulating a national response, but the promise was not fulfilled because the program was discontinued and placed in a block grant with 28 other programs under Chapter 2. It is now clear that under the consolidation, gifted and talented programming is suffering from neglect.

Federal Chapter 2 funds may be used for gifted and talented programs, at the discretion of local educational agencies. But in fact, very few districts are using Chapter 2 in that way. A recent evaluation of Chapter 2 by SRI International found that only 20 percent of the school districts receiving Chapter 2 used any funds for gifted and talented programs. Another study found that those districts

using Chapter 2 for gifted programs spent an average of only $1,000 on this special education.

A Federal role

Reviving a Federal role, as proposed in H.R. 3263, would accomplish several goals. First, it would bring about a renewed commitment to the needs of these students, a commitment that has languished in recent years as States and localities have been left to their own funding devices. Such a Federal role would be entirely in keeping with the following recommendation of the National Commission on Excellence in Education: "The Federal government, in cooperation with States and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups such as gifted and talented."

The Federal Government quite rightly provides special help to other groups who need it, including the disadvantaged, the handicapped, the limited-English-proficient. This legislation would raise the national consciousness by recognizing that gifted and talented students also have special needs.

Second, a Federal program would make existing efforts more effective through coordination, research and evaluation. A small amount of Federal dollars would have a multiplier effect, as State programs would benefit from Federal technical assistance, research findings, and model programs.

Third, such a national effort would be a wise investment in our future. With the aging of our population, we cannot afford to waste young talent. Children with outstanding potential must be discovered at an early age so their abilities can be nurtured during their school years. As Congressman Biaggi testified, "The possibility that these programs might continually transform and invigorate our culture and economy by producing a steady supply of Mark Twains, Marie Curies, or Thomas Edisons, makes them now more attractive than ever."

H.R. 3263 can become the vehicle for discovering and nurturing these "national treasures", in order to give society the contributions it so desperately needs.

EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

Authorization and purpose

H.R. 3263 authorizes a limited but essential Federal role in identifying and meeting the special educational needs of gifted and talented children. This role will be that of capacity-building: stimulating research, training personnel, funding and disseminating model programs, and providing technical assistance. These programs are also intended to supplement and improve the effectiveness of existing State and local programs and of funds expended for gifted children under two other Federal programs, the Chapter 2 education block grant and the Education for Economic Security Act math and science education program.

For these purposes, the bill authorizes $19 million for fiscal year 1987 and such sums as necessary for the four succeeding fiscal years.

Definition

The bill defines gifted and talented children and youth as those who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities. This definition is widely-accepted among educators who work with gifted and talented children.

Selection of grantees

Under the provisions of H.R. 3263, the Secretary of Education will make grants to or contracts with State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies [LEA's], institutions of higher education [IHE's], and other public and private agencies and organizations, including Indian tribes and organizations. These funds will help build the capacity of these agencies to serve gifted and talented students. After consulting with the advisory committee mandated in the bill, the Secretary will make these grants and contracts according to a competitive process, under which eligible agencies will submit applications.

In administering this program, the Secretary is required to give the highest priority to two particular activities: (1) the identification of gifted and talented children who may be overlooked through traditional assessment methods, including individuals of limited-English-proficiency, the economically disadvantaged, individuals with handicaps, and females; and (2) programs and projects that will develop or improve the capability of schools in an entire State or region of the country, through cooperative efforts among SEA's, LEA's, IHE's, and other public and private agencies and organizations, including business, industry, and labor.

Authorized activities

The programs and projects funded may include preservice and inservice training of personnel involved in educating the target population. This training may be provided through fellowships, may encompass training in the supervision of personnel working in gifted programs, and is open to leadership personnel as well as teachers.

Grantees may also use funds to establish and operate model projects and exemplary programs for identifying and educating gifted children, including summer programs and cooperative programs involving business, industry, and education. Other allowable activities include: (1) strengthening the capacity of SEAs and IHEs to provide leadership and assistance to LEAs and private nonprofit schools in the planning, operation, and improvement of gifted and talented education; (2) providing programs of technical assistance and information dissemination; and (3) conducting research through the mandated National Center.

An important component of the legislation is the emphasis on identifying gifted and talented children and youth. A good identification process will be a continuing process, rather than a one-time assessment.

Private school participation

Section 6 of the bill requires the Secretary, in making grants and contracts under the Act, to "ensure that, where appropriate, provision is made for the participation of children and teachers in private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools, including the participation of teachers and other personnel serving such children in preservice and inservice training programs."

This language is consistent with the statutory language and administrative practice in other Federal education programs, such as Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 of ECIA and the Education Professions Development Act. The words "where appropriate" are included because this bill would authorize research projects and information activities that would not involve the participation of either public or private nonprofit elementary school children and personnel, and the requirements of section 6 accordingly would not be applicable. These requirements would apply, however, to the training of teachers and administrators (including the award of fellowships) and to model projects and exemplary and cooperative programs involving SEA's, LEA's, or IHE's. Information and technical assistance also would be provided to both public and private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools to help strengthen and expand education programs for gifted and talented children and youth attending such schools.

National research center

The Secretary is required to establish a National Center for Research and Development in the Education of Gifted and Talented Children and Youth. Up to 30 percent of the funds appropriated in any fiscal year may be used for this center, which will be operated through grant or contract with one or more IHE's or SEA's or a combination of such institutions and agencies. The center shall have a director, who is required to consult with the mandated advisory committee. The functions of the center consist of carrying our research on methods and techniques for identifying and teaching gifted and talented children and youth; conducting program evaluations and surveys; and collecting, analyzing, and developing information needed to accomplish the purposes of the Act.

Advisory committee

The Secretary is required to appoint an advisory committee composed of at least five persons who are not Federal employees. The committee shall include at least one director of gifted and talented programs in an SEA, one person with substantial responsibility for preparing teachers of gifted children in an IHE, one nationally recognized authority on gifted and talented research, one teacher in a special gifted program, and one parent of a student enrolled in a gifted and talented education program. The Secretary must meet with the committee twice yearly.

The committee is charged with advising on the administration of the Act, including the content of regulations. The Secretary is required to seek the advice and counsel of the committee on the following matters: (1) the identification of the most urgent needs for strengthening the capability of elementary and secondary schools

to plan and operate gifted programs; (2) the types of programs authorized by this Act that are best able to meet the needs identified; (3) the assessment of the effectiveness of programs under the Act; and (4) such other matters as the Secretary finds useful.

Federal administration

The Secretary is required to establish or designate a unit within the Department of Education to administer this program and to coordinate all gifted and talented education programs within the Department. This unit will also serve as a focal point of national leadership and information on the educational needs of gifted children and the availability of services to meet those needs. The unit is to be headed by a person of recognized professional qualifications and experience in the field of the education of gifted and talented children and youth.

OVERSIGHT

No findings or recommendations concerning oversight of the programs amended in this bill have been received by this Committee from the Committee on Government Operations. The provisions of H.R. 3263 are based upon findings from the Committee's ongoing oversight of existing programs.

COST ESTIMATE

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated the following costs to the Federal government in implementing this legislation. The Committee concurs in these estimates and adopts them in compliance with clause VII of Rule 13. No cost estimates have been received from any other Federal department or agency.

The CBO letter follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 10, 1986.

Hon. AUGUSTUS F. HAWKINS,
Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the attached cost estimate for H.R. 3263, the Gifted and Talented Children and Youth Education Act of 1986, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and Labor on June 25, 1986.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

RUDOLPH G. PENNER, *Director.*

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

1. Bill number: H R. 3263.

2. Bill title: Gifted and Talented Children and Youth Education Act of 1986.

3. Bill status: As ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and Labor on June 25, 1986.

4. Bill purpose: The purpose of this bill is to authorize a program from 1987 through 1991 to provide assistance to state and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and other public and private agencies and organizations to initiate programs to meet the educational needs of gifted and talented children and youth in elementary and secondary schools. This bill is subject to subsequent appropriations action.

5. Estimated cost to the Federal Government:

[By fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Estimated authorization level	10	11	11	12	13
Estimated outlays	1	8	10	11	12

The costs of this bill fall within function 500.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

This bill authorizes funds for the Department of Education to make grants to our contracts with state or local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, or other public and private agencies and organizations to assist them in carrying out programs for gifted and talented childern and youth.

The 1987 authorization level for the program is stated in the bill. The estimates for the outyears, authorized at such sums as may be necessary, reflect this level adjusted for inflation.

Outlay estimates were made assuming full appropriation of estimated authorization levels, and reflect the spending pattern of similar categorical education programs.

6. Estimated cost to State and local government: This bill authorizes grants with no matching requirement to state and local government and non-government organizations. State and loal governments would therefore not incur any cost as a direct result of the enactment of this bill.

7. Estimate comparison: None.

8. Previous CBO estimate: None.

9. Estimate prepared by: Ken Pott and Lynne Davidson.

10. Estimate approved by: James L. Blum, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

INFLATIONARY IMPACT

Since the bill has a very modest authorization of $10 million for fiscal year 1987 and such sums as necessary for the four succeeding fiscal years, the Committee estimates the inflationary impact will be minimal.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Sec. 1—Findings.—The Congress finds that gifted and talented children are a vital national resource whose special abilities and

talents must be recognized and developed. Often, educational agencies lack the resources needed to identify and serve these students. At greatest risk are those children from economically disadvantaged families who are not always recognized by traditional assessment methods.

The purpose of this legislation is to initiate a coordinated Federal program to meet the needs of gifted and talented students and to supplement State and local expenditures for the identification and education of these students.

Sec. 2—Definitions.—Terms used in this Act are given the same meaning as under Chapter 3 of ECIA or the Higher Education Act. The term "gifted and talented children and youth" is defined in this section.

Sec. 3—Gifted and Talented Program.—This section establishes a Department of Education program to assist SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, and other public and private organizations in carrying out programs to meet the educational needs of the gifted and talented.

Programs funded may include training for personnel, the development of model programs and projects, programs of technical assistance and information dissemination, operation of a national research center, and programs to strengthen SEAs' and IHEs' abilities to provide leadership and assistance.

Sec. 4—National Center.—The Secretary shall establish a National Center to stimulate research on methods and techniques for identifying and teaching gifted and talented children and youth. Not more than 30 percent of the funds authorized under this Act in any fiscal year may be used for the National Center.

Sec. 5—Program Priorities.—In making grants, the Secretary shall emphasize the identification of gifted and talented children and youth, with special consideration of those students who may not be identified through traditional assessment methods. Priority will also be given to those programs to improve the capability to deliver services in an entire State or region.

Sec. 6—Private School Participation.—Provisions are made for the equitable participation of children and teachers in private, nonprofit elementary and secondary schools.

Sec. 7—Advisory Committee.—The Secretary shall appoint a Committee to advise on the administration of this Act, composed of at least five persons who are not Federal employees. The Committee will advise on such matters as the identification of the most urgent needs in gifted and talented education, the kinds of programs that will best serve these needs, and the effectiveness of programs funded under this Act.

Sec. 8—Administration.—An administrative unit as determined by the Secretary of Education will administer the programs authorized under this bill and serve as a focal point of national leadership and information.

Sec. 9—Appropriations.—In fiscal year 1987, $10 million is authorized; in the four succeeding years, such sums as necessary are authorized.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

The bill makes no changes in existing law.

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